

International District Neighborhood Notes

October 2, 2002
9:15 am to 10:35 am
11:45 am to 1:30 pm

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We drove the perimeter of the neighborhood, noting major entrances and gauging the layout and cohesiveness of its different regions. We then parked on Jackson Street between 12th and Rainier and surveyed the northeastern side of the neighborhood (NE of I-5): We started at the intersection of Main and 12th, then walked southeast on 12th to its intersection with Jackson, then northeast on Jackson to its intersection with Rainier (Boren), then east along Rainier to its intersection with King, then southwest along King to 12th, then 12th to the I-90 overpass, then retraced our steps along 12th to Weller. We walked northeast along Weller to Rainier (changed camera cards at #24 on card #1), then east along Rainier to Dearborn, then southwest along Dearborn to 10th. Finally we walked northwest on 10th to Jackson and northeast on Jackson to our car.

We then moved the car to the Uwajimaya Plaza parking lot to survey the southwest section of the neighborhood. We started at the large offramp from I-90 that exits onto the intersection of Airport Way and Dearborn. After taking one photo (#23 on card 2) we took a quick break to fetch another camera card then returned to park at Uwajimaya again. We started at the same point (I-90 offramp) and walked west on Airport Way to 4th Street, then northwest on 4th to Yesler, then northeast on Yesler to 5th, then southeast on 5th to Dearborn/Airport Way, then northeast on Dearborn to 6th, then northwest on 6th to Yesler, then back down 6th to Main, then northeast on Main to Maynard, then southeast on Maynard to S Charles, then northeast on S Charles to 7th, northwest on 7th to Jackson, northeast on Jackson to 8th, southeast on 8th to Dearborn, then back down Dearborn to return along 6th to the Uwajimaya plaza.

Summary

Chinatown/International District is divided neatly in half by I-5. The two halves have very distinct characters. The west half is well marked with thematic elements.

Observations

Northeast Section

The northeast half appears to be primarily residential and “local” in flavor, with few thematic elements. The small, streetside businesses are primarily Vietnamese. There is some spillover of Asian businesses into the streets outside boundaries of the neighborhood, and there are a number of large non-Asian industries and agencies within these boundaries—especially along Weller, Lane, and Dearborn. Many businesses along Main, Jackson, and King have names only in Vietnamese (little or no English).

Northeast Section Entry Points

The Main/12th intersection is a major entry point to this section of the neighborhood; a sign saying “Welcome to Little Saigon/ International District” marks this point, and there is a short stretch of thematic lights along 12th to Jackson. Minor entry points include King Street, Weller, and Dearborn.

Jackson Street

Although Main street forms the “official” northwestern border, the de facto, walkable border is Jackson street. Between 12th and Rainier, Jackson is lined with thematic lights. The rest of the street has shopping plazas containing Vietnamese businesses, residential buildings, and small produce markets. The Jackson Street underpass beneath I-5 is a major connection between the northeast and southeast half of the neighborhood, and the I-5 pillars along Jackson are painted red and yellow with a motif of carp and dragonflies. Thematic lights (which continue down Jackson to the southwestern part of the neighborhood) begin just northeast of this underpass.

King Street

King Street has no thematic lights, but the businesses along it are still primarily Asian.

Weller Street

Weller Street has several larger Asian businesses and warehouses, such as the Golden Pheasant Noodle Co. and Sun Sun Oriental Foods.

Weller/Dearborn

Between Weller and Dearborn, the character of the neighborhood changes. Goodwill Industries, at Weller and Rainier, takes up a very large chunk of the block, with buildings, parking lots, and warehouses. The Indian Health Board offices

	<div><div>draft 3</div><div>100% ready</div></div>	<div>seattle wayfinding system</div> <div>international district neighborhood</div>	04.17.2003
	<div><div><div><div><div></div><div>(Leschi Center) lie on both sides of 12th street at the intersection with Weller. Between the Leschi Center and Dearborn St. is a large undeveloped vegetated area that is crisscrossed with footpaths and is home to a number of transients.</div></div></div><div><div>10th Avenue</div><div>10th Avenue rises steeply from Dearborn to Weller, and has no particular “Asian” character. There are three or four homeless shanties along the northeast side of the street.</div></div><div><div>Southwest Section</div><div>The southwest half is clearly the “visitors’” section of the neighborhood. There are many thematic elements: primary among these are very large (8-9 feet in length) and very colorful fiberglass dragons that wrap around streetlights, and shorter, metal “pagoda-like” lamps. The southwest section appears to be primarily Chinese and Taiwanese.</div></div><div><div>Southwest Section Entry Points</div><div>There are several entrances to this section of the “official” neighborhood: the I-90 offramp at Airport Way, the intersection of Jackson and 4th, the intersection of 5th and Yesler, the I-5 offramp onto 6th Avenue, and the intersection of 6th and Airport Way. However, a person driving or walking into the neighborhood via these entrances might not initially realize that he/she is in Chinatown. Thematic elements such as fiberglass dragons on the streetlights, Asian-style lamps, and Asian-style kiosks and architecture are concentrated within the “core” of this section: a region bounded by 5th , Dearborn, 8th, and Jackson. Within this core region the neighborhood character is very clear. The clearest entries to this inner section are along 5th street at Jackson, King, and Weller.</div></div><div><div>4th Avenue</div><div>This boundary is lined with upscale business/residential plazas and parking lots on the Chinatown side, and King Street Station on the Pioneer Square side. There are a couple of Chinese/Asian businesses.</div></div><div><div>5th Avenue</div><div>At the southeast end of 5th lies the Uwajimaya Plaza, a shopping and residential development that projects an upscale but distinctly Asian tone. The same thematic lights that line the surrounding streets stretch between the shopping center and the parking lot, and there are dragons visible at either end of</div></div></div></div>	<div><div><div><div><div></div><div>the plaza along 5th. The rest of 5th (within Chinatown) offers several gateways to the heart of the neighborhood: Weller, King, and Jackson are all marked with lightpost dragons, and there are Chinatown banners (the only ones we noted), as well as a green “welcome to Chinatown” sign at the 5th and Jackson intersection. As you continue northeast along 5th, thematic elements become fewer.</div></div></div><div><div>6th Avenue</div><div>The I-5 offramp onto 6th is an “official” entrance to Chinatown, and is signed as such (with a small brown directional sign). 6th has thematic lights from Washington Street to Dearborn, and there are also thematic lights extending up Washington. The street dips sharply to Main street. There is an “International Terrace” apartment building at the corner of 6th and Main. From Main to Lane, 6th has many Asian businesses and feels as though it is part of the core of Chinatown. There is a green “welcome to Chinatown” sign at 6th and Lane.</div></div><div><div>Maynard Street</div><div>Maynard continues the “heart of Chinatown” feel, especially between Jackson and Dearborn. At the intersection with Main, and extending toward the I-5 overpass, are a Seattle Parks & Rec park called Kobe Terrace, and a community garden (there's a lovely little Asian-style wooden entryway to the park). At King and Maynard is a small community park with many thematic elements, including a pagoda-like shelter and fish-shaped benches. There are two dragons visible from the intersection of Maynard and Dearborn. Maynard is lined with thematic lights from Main to Dearborn.</div></div><div><div>7th Avenue</div><div>This street, while retaining the architecture and feel of the core Chinatown district, has more residential and fewer business buildings along it. At Jackson & 7th, there is an Asian museum with an elaborate façade. There are a number of Taiwanese flags along this section. There is a small park (International Childrens' Park) at 7th and Lane. 7th is lined with thematic lights from Main to Weller.</div></div><div><div>8th Avenue</div><div>8th marks the northeast boundary of the “central” Chinatown region. It is lined with thematic lights. There is a dragon visible from the corner of 8th and Dearborn, and there is a green “Welcome to Chinatown” sign at 8th and Lane. The businesses and residences along this section are still clearly Asian.</div></div></div></div>	
<div><div>international district</div><div>major corridors</div></div>			



1.2-1.4 12th/main



1.14-1.16 jackson/rainier



1.17-1.19 rainier/king



1.21-1.23 12/to lake



2.2-2.3 weller/rainier



2.4-2.6 rainier/dearborn



2.10-2.12 dearborn/under I-5



2.13 10th/dearborn



3.1-3.5 airport/5th/dearborn



3.6-3.9 4th/airport



3.13-3.14 jackson/4th



3.18-3.20 4th/washington



3.21-3.22 5th/overpass



3.53-3.54 6th/yesler



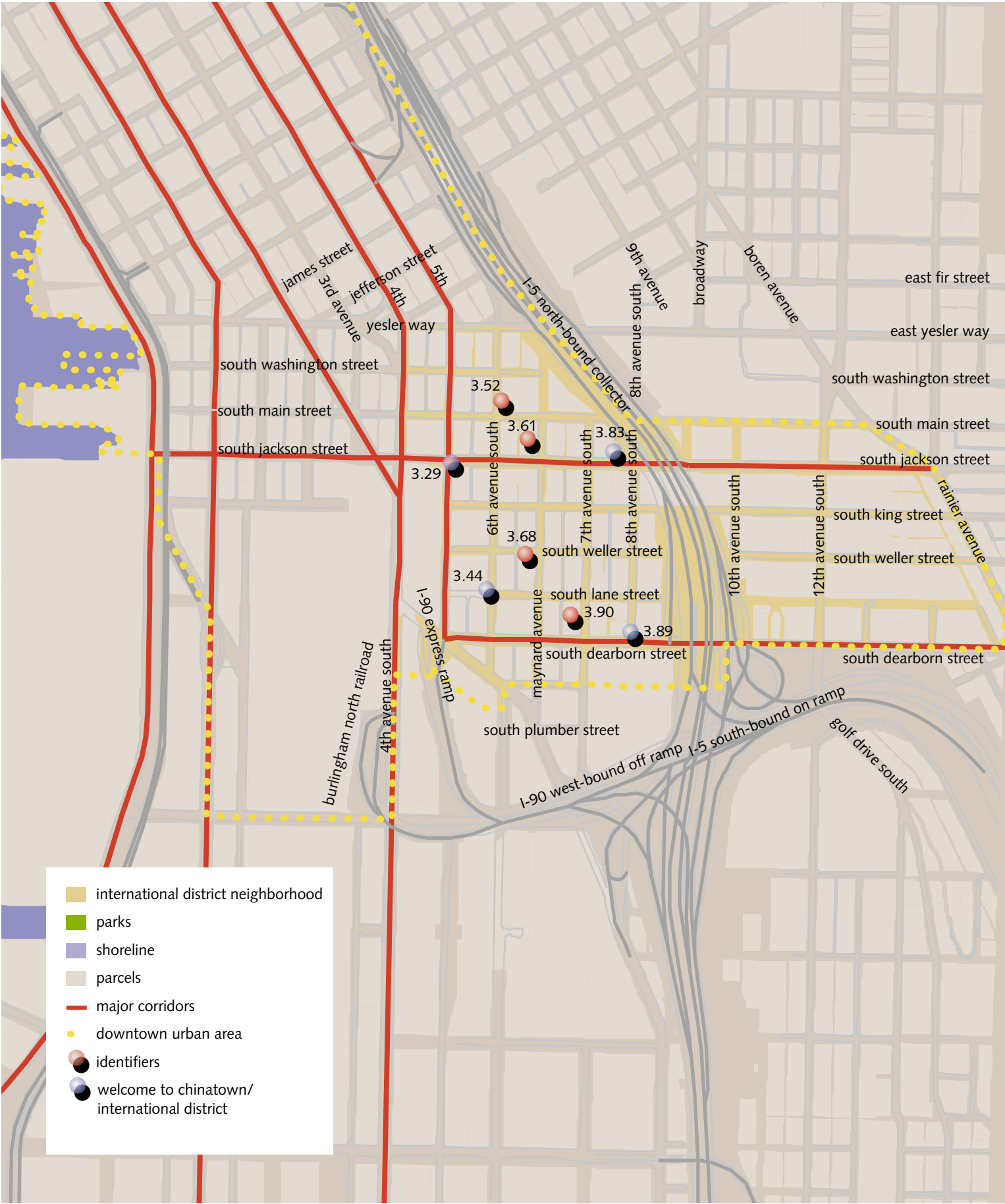
3.70-3.71 airport/s charles



3.72-3.73 7h/s. charles



3.25



3.29



3.52



3.61



3.68



3.90



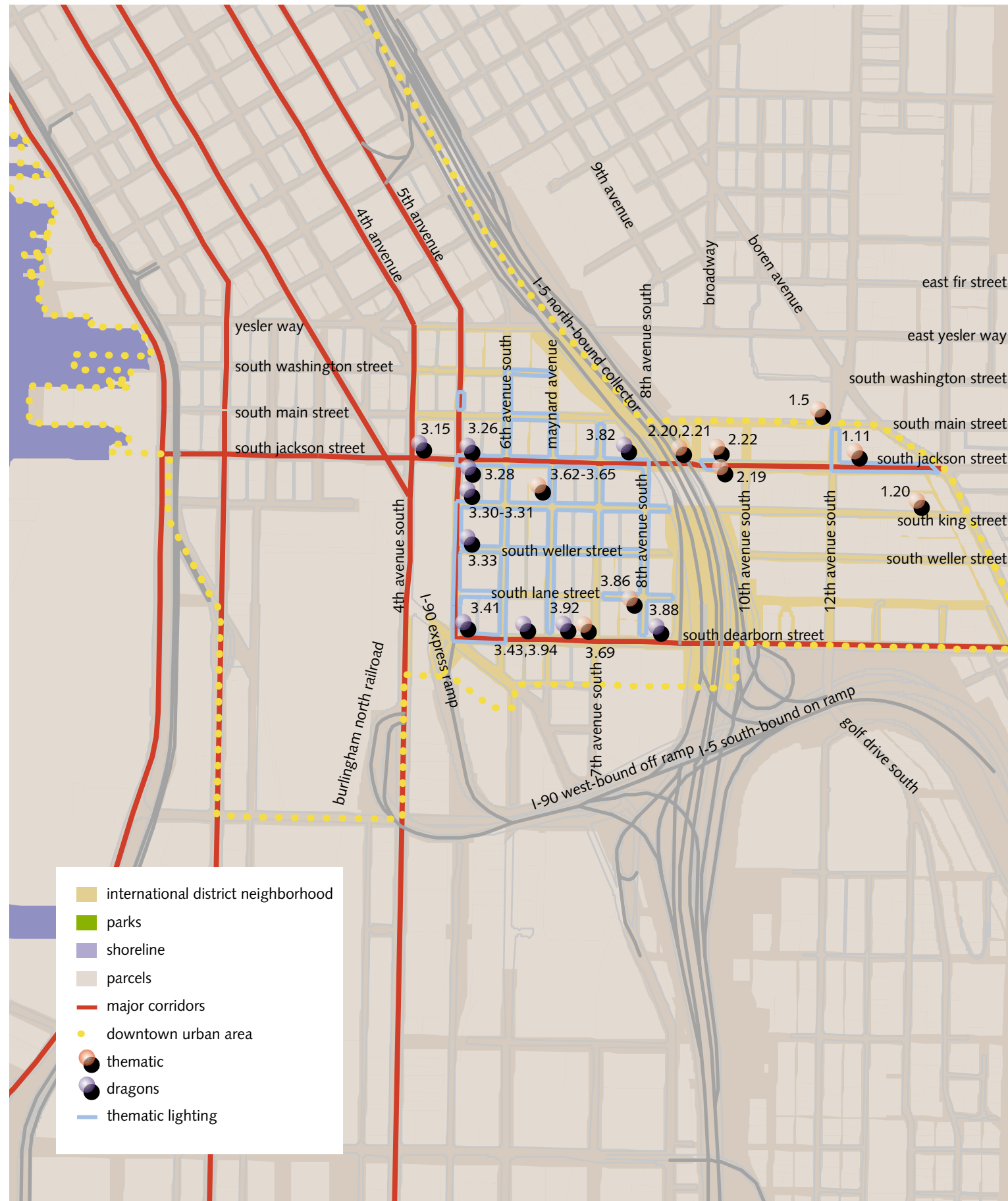
3.44



3.83



3.89



1.5



1.11



2.19



2.20



2.21



2.22



3.15



3.26



3.28



3.30



3.31 (same as 3.30)



3.32



3.33



3.41



3.43



3.62-3.63



3.64



3.65



3.69



3.82



3.86



3.88



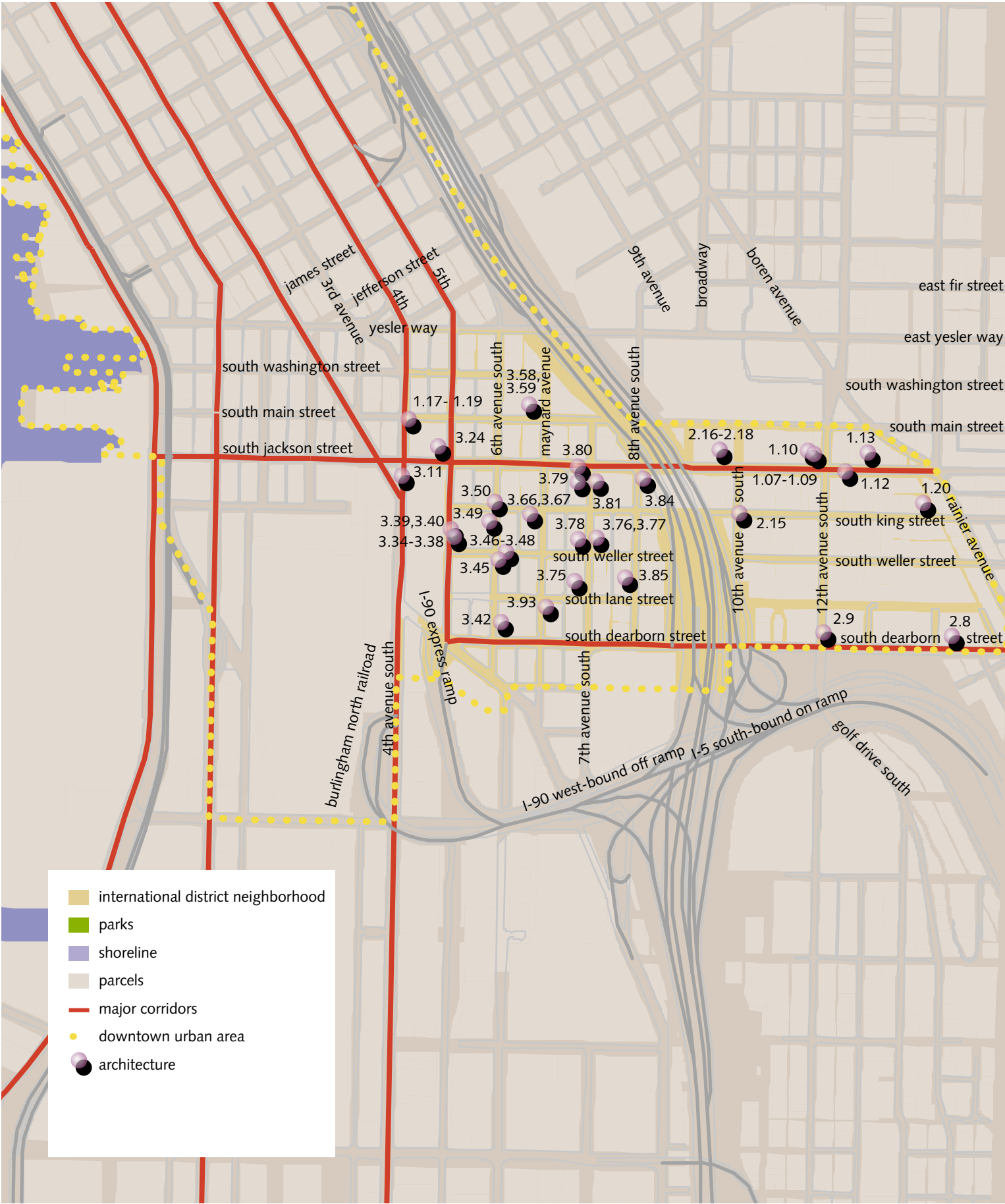
3.92



3.94



3.96



1.07-1.09



1.10



1.12



1.13



1.17-1.19



1.20



2.9



2.8



2.15



2.16-2.18



3.11



3.24



3.34-3.38



3.39-3.40



3.42



3.45



3.46-3.48



3.49



3.50



3.58-3.59



3.66



3.67



3.75



3.76-3.77



3.78



3.79



3.80



3.81



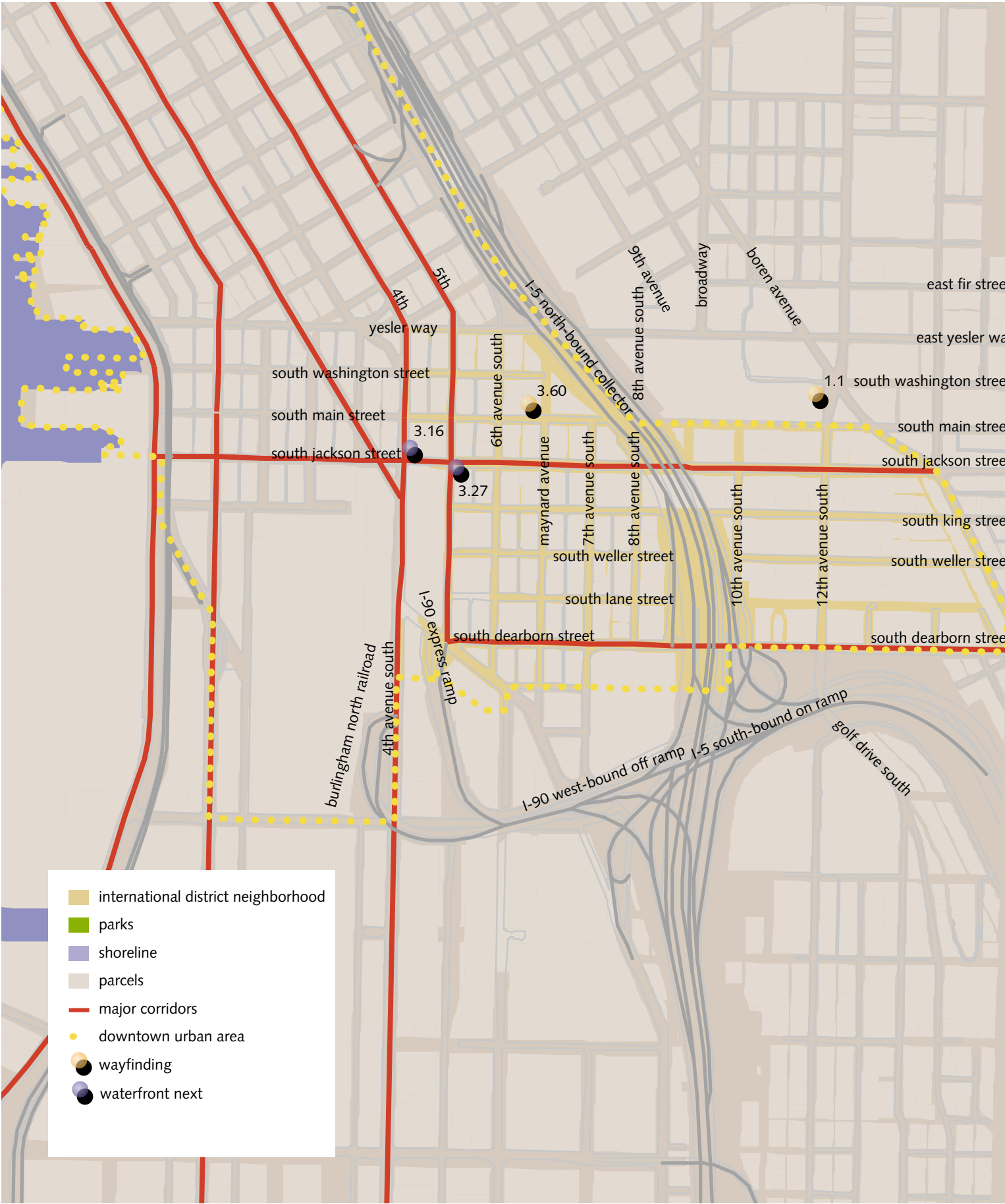
3.84



3.85



3.93



1.1



3.16



3.27



3.60



1.6



1.42



1.43



2.23



2.52



2.53



2.54



3.10



3.15



3.17



3.18



3.19



3.21



3.23



3.55 same as commercial 3.28



4.132



4.160



4.161